



NEWS RELEASE

Sherry Bray
Sherry.Bray@ky.gov
Kentucky State Police
502.782.1781

Chuck Wolfe
Chuck.Wolfe@ky.gov
Transportation Cabinet
502.564.3419

For Immediate Release

Kentucky highway fatalities increasing in 2012

Preliminary statistics indicate fatalities up 5 compared to same period in 2011

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Feb. 9, 2012) – The rate of fatalities on Kentucky’s roadways has increased in 2012, according to preliminary numbers from the Kentucky State Police. There were 64 fatalities as of Feb. 9, five more than at the same time last year.

“Although it is still early, we want to be proactive in addressing this increase in highway deaths on Kentucky roadways,” said KSP Spokesperson Lt. David Jude.

Of the 64 people killed so far this year, 31 were not wearing seat belts and nine died in crashes involving alcohol.

“With the decent winter weather, more people have been traveling our roadways, which might explain the fatality increase,” said Kentucky Office of Highway Safety (KOHS) Director Bill Bell. “However, it does not explain why people are not making safe decisions when they get behind the wheel.”

Statistics from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) indicate that seat belts, when worn correctly, reduce the risk of fatalities by 45 percent for front-seat vehicle occupants, and by 60 percent for pickup truck, SUV and minivan occupants. Also according to NHTSA, regular seat belt use is the single most effective way to protect against and reduce fatalities in motor vehicle crashes.

“KSP wants to remind motorists not to become complacent when it comes to highway safety. We plan to be vigilant in enforcing seat belt laws and will continue targeting impaired drivers who endanger the lives of others,” said Jude.

The KOHS offers various highway safety educational programs to the public and distributes federal highway safety grants to state and local highway safety agencies. It annually partners with state and local law enforcement to promote the national “Click It or Ticket” seat belt campaign and “Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over” impaired driving campaign.

“Our office will continue working with highway safety agencies across the state to educate everyone on the benefits of safe driving habits,” said Bell.

A final total will not be available until April 2, but preliminary numbers for 2011 indicate there were 720 fatalities on Kentucky roadways. Of those, 49 percent were not buckled up and 16 percent involved alcohol.

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